
A True
A C C O U N T
O F T H E
Passages at MERGEN
I N T H E
KINGDOM of S R A M,

After Captain *Anthony Weltden* arrived at that Port in
the *Curtana Frigate*, for Account of the E A S T -
I N D I A Company.

Humbly Presented

To the Honourable the Knights, Citizens and Burgeesses in Parliament
Assembled : By **Samuel White.**

IN the State of my Case, representing the insupportable Grievances I at present labour under by the *East-India* Companies unjust and arbitrary Practices ; I had occasion to intimate that *His Majesty* of *Syam*, upon notice that the said Companies Servants had committed Hostilities against him by seizing his Ships, was resolved to appeal to our *Sovereign Lord the King*, and make *His Majesty* the sole Arbitrator of all Matters depending 'twixt him and the said Company. For which Expedition he was pleas'd to command my Service, and order'd me to prepare a Ship of my own for the Voyage, as I accordingly did, and only waited for my dispatches from Court ; When on the 26th of June, 87. Captain *Weltden* in the *Curtana*, and soon after Captain *Goslin* in the *Sloop James* came into the Port of *Mergen* under *His Majesties* Colours, and when I had very respectfully receiv'd Captain *Weltden* at his Landing, he requir'd me in the Name of *Our Sovereign Lord the King* to summon all the *English* on the Place, that he might Publish *His Majesties* Commands to them, as was accordingly done, and after he had read the *Proclamation*, together with a Paper from the *President and Council*, he demanded whether they were ready to give due Obedience to their *Sovereign's* Orders in leaving the *King* of *Syam's* Service, and return with him to *Fort St. George*, whereto 'twas unanimously answer'd, *Tes*, and *God Save the King*, after which satisfactory reply

ply, he told them he came not to injure any of them, but to protect their Persons and Estates, and that they might pay themselves any Arrears of Wages by Plunder on the *King of Syam*, or his Subjects Goods. At the hearing whereof, I thought it next to my Allegiance to my *Native Sovereign*, a most incumbent Duty on me to that *Prince* I had the Honour to serve in so considerable a Charge, to tell them, It much rejoiced me to find they all agreed in a Loyal Obedience to the Command of the *King Our Lord*; and to put them into better Circumstances for a present Compliance, without any such acts of Violence as was intimated by the Captain, I was ready to pay every Man what Wages was due to that very day, as I accordingly did, and declar'd them at that time discharg'd from the *King of Syam's* Service.

After this, the Captain had a Conference with those *Magistrates* on the Place, that were *Native Syamers*, to whom he delivered a Letter from the *President and Council*, injoyning them to forward one that accompanied it to the *King of Syam*; the Import whereof was to demand satisfaction for Injuries alledged to be done to the Company and their Dependents, to amount of about 65000 *l.* and to acquaint him that they had sent this Ship to block up that *Port*, with order to await sixty days for an Answer, and in failure of compliance in that time, to proceed to make themselves Reparation by force of their Arms.

As to my self, the Captain was pleas'd to tell me he had order to expect thirty days for my Answer; but I was better resolv'd than to need any time to consider whether I would obey *His Majesties* Command, and accordingly I did without delay declare my mind to him in Writing: But as to the Mandate from the *President and Council*, wherein they did by their own Authority impose on me to take up Arms against the *King of Syam*, I could not but protest against it, nor can I now mention it without avowing a just Abhorrence of so nefarious an Act as it would have been in me, to draw a Sword against my Royal and bountiful *Master*, to whose *Princely* Benignity I stand so highly oblig'd, that all the Services of my Life can never discharge me, and therefore I hope I should rather embrace the most cruel Death, than be induc'd to any thing may justly render me ungrateful.

ALL things did to this time look as well as was possible under so strange a Conjunction, there passing daily intercourses of Friendship betwixt the Captain and Us of the Shore, and he declaring himself very well pleas'd with his kind Reception by the *Syam Magistrates*, and the care was taken to translate and forward his dispatches to *Court*; so that there was not any cause to doubt but this Tranquillity would at least continue till the sixty days limited for the *King of Syam's* Answer were expired. Wherefore on the fifth of *July* I went to *Tenassary*, a Town about fifty Miles distant, to transact some Affairs of the *King of Syam's* that were under my care, but I had not been there two days before I was alarm'd by Letters from *Mergen*, acquainting me that the face of Affairs had on a sudden, put on a very ill Aspect, for that the Captain had actually made an Assault on the *Port*, in breaking up the Piles that were plac'd for its defence, and seiz'd two Boats the *Magistrates* employ'd to await for the Ships expected from abroad, and also remov'd my foresaid Ship that was fitted for the *King of Syam's* Service to *England*, carrying her from her moorings under command of his own Frigate. Which surprizing Hostilities had so incens'd the People, that no *Englismans* Life could be suppos'd secure amongst them; wherefore it concern'd me, as I regarded my own safety, to dispeed my return, as I accordingly did, and arriv'd at *Mergen* the sixth day after my departure, being the

11th of July. Nor was I sooner there than divers of our Nation came to give me a more particular Account of these unhappy Passages in my absence, and were presently follow'd by the *Syam Magistrates*, exclaiming against these Outrages with most passionate resentments; demanding of me what could induce the Captain thus to violate his Faith so solemnly and publickly engag'd to them, in declaring that he would await sixty days for Answer to his pretended demands at Court; and now in this manner to break in upon them before a quarter of the time was expir'd. I had only to answer, That they well knew I was absent on the King's Service at *Tenassary*, whence this ill News had recall'd me some days sooner than intended, so that I was under as great a Consternation as themselves possibly could be at these strange Proceedings; but I had notice the Captain was now coming a Shore, from whom I would fully inform my self, and communicate to them the truth of what I understood concerning it, which they told me they should with impatience expect, and so with a more than ordinary Fervency, injoyning me to manage my self in this Affair as my Duty to his Majesty the King of *Syam* oblig'd me, they withdrew with much seeming discontent and concern'dness. Some hours after, Captain *Weltden* came to my House, whom I presently accosted as the occasion requir'd, telling him how much I was astonish'd at the sudden change of things in my few days absence; And first I tax'd him with the affront and injury done to the Government of the Place, wherein he had forfeited his Obligation to them, which he voluntarily enter'd into by his own Proposal, and I fear'd so unaccountable an Action might be of pernicious Consequence. For what dependence could we have on their sincerity, when we had led them into the breach of Faith by our Example? And then as to what more particularly related to my self in his entering my Ship with armed Men, and carrying her under Command of his own, I urg'd to him, That such Violences did no way accord with his Declaration at his arrival, wherein he assur'd Us he came not to molest or injure any of Us, either in our Persons or Estates, but to protect and assist Us in all things, as I accordingly confided. But now I found much cause to doubt that I was not secure in any thing, wherefore I desir'd him to let me know the meaning of what he had already done, and what I was to expect for the future? Whereto the Captain was pleas'd to answer, That I need not trouble my self so much in this matter, for nothing had been nor should be done with design of prejudice to my self or any *Englishman* on the Place, but only for his own security, which he must not be wanting to endeavour; and as to my Ship she was safe, and not less at my command than when she rid before my own door; the occasion of his removing her being upon some intimations he had receiv'd, that he should be deny'd any more Provisions from the Shore, and hearing my Ship had good store aboard for her intended Voyage to *Europe*, he brought her under command of his own for a Recruit in case of necessity. I reply'd, That I was very sorry he was so easily inclin'd to credit such false and groundless Suggestions, since he had not only my repeated Promises, that nothing the Place could afford should be wanting to him, but had also experimented my corresponding Performances in larger supplies than his occasions had hitherto requir'd; which he readily and thankfully acknowledg'd, and added, that what was done was *Irrevocably* past, but re-assur'd me I should not be a Sufferer in any thing.

As to his drawing up the Piles that were plac'd for the defence of the Port he had little to say, only that in regard they were not finish'd before his arrival, he look'd upon it to be against the Law of Arms for them to go on fortifying in that time he had limited for a Cessation.

And

And as to his sending his People to seize the Boats and Men the *Magistrates* had employ'd to await without the *Port*, to give advices to the Ships expected from abroad, he would have justify'd it by a Reflection on me, saying he was certify'd I was instrumental, or at least had some Cognizance of that matter, and he took it more ill because he had formerly in occasional Discourse, assur'd me that whatever should arrive on any bottom, that appear'd to belong to me or any *Englishman*, should be duly deliver'd to the Proprietor. I answer'd him, That as I never doubted his Promise in that regard, so neither could I have any fears of the contrary; for how great soever the Priviledges were, which the *Companies* potent Influences at *Court* may have prevail'd to obtain of his *Majesty*; I was heartily satisfy'd that *Our Gracious Sovereign* would not give them a Power to destroy and ruine their fellow Subjects, that were in all things obedient to his *Royal* Commands, as he had found my self and all with me; wherefore it was no good *Logick* for him to infer from his foresaid Promise, that I was oblig'd to betray my Trust, in discovering what my Superiors had caus'd to be done in the Affairs of that *Prince* I had the honour and happiness to serve many years; and might, I hop'd, without any stain to my Allegiance to my *Native Sovereign* continue so to do, till War was actually declar'd against him; Or that in that interim I receiv'd order to surrender up my Charge and Commission to a Successor in my Office. Which was the sum of our Conference at this time, The Captain and his Company being pleas'd to stay with me till about nine at Night, and then returned aboard his Ship.

July 12th. Early this Morning the *Magistrates* were again with me, to know what the Captain had offer'd in Justification of his strange Actions; to whom I told the real Truth of all that pass'd betwixt us, which did still further incense them, urging, that if he had not better pretences for what was already done, they had reason to fear worse afterwards. For what authority could his coming there with the *Companies* unreasonable and groundless demands give him to interrupt their business in the *King's* Service? And to seize a Ship in *Port*, to whomsoever she belonged, was yet as much to the *King's* Dishonor, as if it had been his own. I endeavour'd to palliate the matter as well as I could, and perswade them to believe the Captain would offer them no further *Prejudice*, but await the remainder of the limited time for an Answer from *Court*. And here I enquir'd what was the meaning of the Fleet of Gallies that I saw yesterday and to day in the River full man'd? They readily told me, it was to prevent the like which had happen'd, for the future, and soon after parted in a great Disgust.

In the Afternoon the Captain came again ashore and gave me a Visit, and at his return aboard in the Evening, when he came to the Waters side he observ'd the pre-mention'd Gallies to move cross the River, and thereupon sent his *Lieutenant* to me to enquire the reason, and declare he doubted some design against him: Which I assur'd him I was wholly ignorant of, and for his further satisfaction offer'd my self to accompany him till he was past whatsoever he could suppose had any appearance of danger; as I accordingly did, and afterwards at his earnest invitation proceeded with him on board his Ship, where I remained till next day Afternoon, and then returned to my House, in which interim I found all had continued very quiet, and no news of any further motion by the *Magistrates*: which gave me hopes that what had pass'd would have only awaken'd them to keep the stricter Guard, and make the best provision they could for their future Defence. And because the Captain had promis'd me he would give them no more such Provocations, I flatter'd my self into a pleasing Opinion, that

we should have been so far Friends again, as to have our Lives secure from any attempt, at least till the sixty days were accomplish'd.

But while I was thus dreaming of Safety, I found my self and all my Countrymen on the brink of Destruction; For the very next day, being the 14th of July, the Captain, with several others, coming in the Afternoon to my House, I detain'd them to Supper, and at the usual hour, betwixt eight and nine of the Clock, he was for returning aboard, when all the Company waited on him to the outward Porch of my House, but I accompany'd him about thirty foot further to the Waters side, where my Barge lay ready to receive him. And at the very moment of our parting, I was surpriz'd by a sudden Blow with a great Club on the Sleeve of my Gown, and turning short upon the Villain that struck at me, he was so disanimated, that he durst not stay to repeat the stroke, but immediately fled from me; though I was destitute of any defence, being only in my Night-gown and Slippers, without Hat or Cap on my head. At the same instant the Captain was by a more unfortunate Blow from another hand knock'd down, but in little time recover'd himself, though with the loss of much Blood: and just as we were thus assaulted, I heard a hideous confused noise of a Multitude, which gave me a suspicion they were at once assassinating all of our *Nation*, in which dismal distress I first thought of retreating to my House, where besides sixteen great Guns mounted on a Platform, I had store of Ammunition and Arms of all sorts within doors; but I no sooner mov'd that way, than I discern'd a great company of armed Men, that were got between me and home, and so I had no other relief but to fly to my Barge, as I did, and presently got her off, when I spy'd the Captain, and adventur'd to put ashore again to take him in. The Guards which attended him being fourteen Men with a *Lieutenant*, in two Boats, made one discharge, and adventur'd to Land, where they were overpower'd, and all cut off, and so was every *Englishman*, (save four) with some of other Nations that were our Friends, as I was afterwards certify'd by a *French Ship* from that Place, before I left *India*.

The Captain and I, having by a Miracle of Mercy made an Escape thus far, we made all the haste we could to get aboard our Ships for further security, and in our passage down I had the additional affliction of seeing my House, Ware-houses, and Ship-yard all in a Flame: nor were we without a Prospect of encountering new Dangers; for as we proceeded towards our Ships, we had fight of several *Syam* Boats, which were laid to intercept any that should escape from the Shore; and it was with much difficulty that we pass'd by them undiscover'd, till at last we arriv'd at the Place where the Ships rode the day before; but to our great Amazement they now appear'd not: Which after all former fears, cast us quite into despair, concluding some fatal Distaster had also befallen them, and so depriv'd us of all possibility of saving our selves. However, that we might live as long as we could, we resolv'd to make down with the Tide, which then happily favour'd us, to be farther from the Town at break of day. And under this doleful Consternation, while we seem'd surrounded with Deaths on all sides, having only to choose whether we would return to be kill'd, or proceed to be starv'd or drown'd: As we row'd along we descry'd something that loom'd like a Ship, which in two hours hard Rowing we came up with, and she gave us new Life in proving to be my Ship *Resolution*, where we found Captain *Gofflin* Commander of the *Sloop James*, with his Mate who escap'd in their Boat, and carry'd down the first sad News of the *Bloody Tragedy*; upon which the *Curtana* and my Ship cut their Cables,

and flood out over the *Bar*, where we happily got aboard about three of the Clock in the Morning, the *Curtana* being then about two Leagues from us, and still under Sail, wherefore we fired our fore-Chase, as a sign for them to Anchor, and about four of the Clock sent a Boat for the Doctor to dress the Captains Wounds, who about seven was returned again with Orders to the Mates, that they should bring the Ship nearer mine: but they were all so full of fear, that they took no notice of it, but as soon as the Tide presented, they weigh'd and stood directly for the Channel, with the *King's* Colours flying; and it was certainly the want of Wind, and not of good Will, that prevented their running away with the Ship, and gave the Captain opportunity of overtaking them in my Long-boat about seven at Night, at which time he got safely aboard the *Curtana*.

THIS is a faithful Relation of all that pass'd under my Cognizance in this dismal Catastrophe, wherein, by a miraculous Providence, I escap'd with my Life, but was at once depriv'd of a very considerable Estate I had already acquir'd, and a fair Prospect of a far greater addition to it: And what ought not to be a less trouble to my Mind, is, that by means of these unaccountable proceedings at *Mergen*, I have lost my *Interest* in the Favour of one of the best *Princes* in the World, and lie at present under the undeserved censure of having been treacherous to his *Interest*, by whose *Gracious Indulgence* I was advanc'd as much above my expectation as desert; And moreover had assurance that his *Royal Bounty* and Goodness still design'd to have done greater things for me: For how strange soever it may appear to those who know my unworthiness of so high an Honour, yet in a grateful Recognition of my Obligations, I will tell the truth, in declaring that I stood registred in his *Majesties* Decrees to have succeeded my *Lord Phaulkon* in the prime Ministry of the Affairs of the Kingdom. But yet all this that relates to my particular Misfortunes, is not worthy of a Thought, when I reflect how much the Dignity of *Our Sovereign Lord the King* has suffer'd, and what irreparable prejudice has been done to the Honour and Interest of the *Nation*, by those strange measures have been lately taken in respect to *Syam*, and some other parts of *India*, which have not only ruin'd me and several others in our Estates, but destroy'd the Lives of many of his *Majesties* useful Subjects. And these are yet but the beginnings of our Sorrows, for the ill Effects of our new Enterprizes, will be felt by Posterity in an entire Loss of that noble and beneficial Commerce, unless some speedy and effectual Course be taken to retrieve and preserve it, which I hope will be accordingly considered by *HIM* or *Them*, who have been the occasion of what I have here related of the Blood-shed and Misery of their poor distressed Countrymen at *Mergen*; For the guilt thereof is much more imputable to them than the *Syammers*, who in regard to the Provocations and Apprehensions they were under, are in great measure excusable. For not to say any thing here of the grounds of our Companies quarrel with *Syam*, or their strange manner of prosecuting it, I am now only to take notice of this particular Expedition, which happening in that Place where I had so great a share in the Government, and consequently a Power to dispose matters according to my Inclinations; In the first place my being an *Englishman* was enough at that Juncture to make the Natives something jealous of me: And then the respect that I paid to the Authority of *Our Sovereign Lord the King* in my friendly Reception of the Captain who had his Commission, with my dutiful Obedience to his *Royal Command* in dismissing all my

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Countrymen from the King of Syam's Service, might very reasonably encrease their suspicions. Nor was it a small inducement to their further doubts, that the Company were pleas'd to employ so despicable a Force for so considerable an Attempt, which might justly incline them to presume there was some dependence on my self and those under my Command. For to send no more than one little Ship of 100 Tuns, and a Sloop of 30 Tuns, with a few Europeans on them both, and to design to great a Work with this little Armado, as to block up the Port, and take all the Ships, was so prodigious an Exploit, that it astonish'd the Syamers, and will, I believe, cause great admiration in others. To which I must add, that the Moors, Portuguese, and a few Dutch that resided there, who were always very envious of our flourishing settlement at that Place, could not possibly have wish'd for a fitter opportunity to undermine our Interest; and I am very certain they did industriously improve it, in representing and aggravating every thing to our greatest disadvantage. But yet after all, I am well assur'd the Syamers, could never have been transported to that bloody Fury, had not these unhappy Actions of Captain *Welden* confirm'd their former Fears, and put them upon doing that Violence to secure themselves from the Conspiracy they concluded was form'd against them by all the English at that Place. Nor must I omit to intimate, that the Captain did afterwards, with great concern and trouble, acknowledge he was sensible of his unhappy Inadvertencies, declaring he had been betray'd by the false Suggestions and evil Advice of some treacherous Persons he too much confided in.

AND here at the close I beg leave to add a Word or two in Reflection on that false and scandalous News was put into the Gazette the 26th of July past, the Words are these, *The Letters likewise add, that at Tenasserim and Mergy, belonging to the King of Syam, the English Fugitives, and Relicks of the late Interloping Faction, that fled to Phaulkon's assistance, and were employed by him in the King of Syam's Service, being fifty seven Persons were all cut off by an Insurrection of 600 of the Natives, with their Governor Burneby, a treacherous Deserter from the Companies Service, supposed to have been corrupted by Phaulkon when Burneby was Chief for the Company at Syam, none escaped with Life, but Mr. White, Governour of Mergen for the King of Syam, and he by swimming off to a small Ship of the Companies riding near Mergy, that saved and relieved him, notwithstanding his former miscarriages, by giving him a small Prize Ship in which he sailed for, and arrived at the Cape, and (it is thought) will come from thence to Europe in some of the Dutch East-India Ships, the small Ship being not fitted for a Europe Voyage.*

This is the Paragraph, and 'tis really great pity the Authors Name was not affix'd to it, whereby we might know who he is amongst Mankind that dares with such audacious effrontery impose on the Publick. I cannot readily imagine what should tempt any Man to such a Crime, unless it be some body who is conscious to himself, he has been the fundamental occasion of all that Blood and Ruine at Mergen, and now hopes by this calumnious Forgery to cover his Guilt from the cognizance of the World. And certainly it must be some such Person that fram'd this Story, wherein there is not the least semblance of Truth, saving that he has hit about the number of them that were slain: but then to wound their Names after they had so unhappily lost their Lives, in a most false and groundless accusing them

to have been *Interlopers* and *Fugitives*, speaks the Author to have more of the Cruelty of a *Canibal* than the Charity of a Christian. For first, I dare affirm to the Author's face, and can testify to the World, that near one third of them that fell, were the very Men that came on the *Curtana* to fight the Companies Battels, and amongst all the rest, there was no more than one single Person that came out in an Interloping Ship, the others being generally such as had resided some years in the Country, and several of them came the preceding year from *Madras* by leave of the *President and Council*, to serve the *King of Syam* in his Wars with *Golcondah* and *Pegu*. But I observe our Author doth in this malicious misrepresentation, spit his venom more directly at that unfortunate Man Mr. *Richard Burneby*, whom he brands with the black Character of a *Treacherous Deserter*, which is so notorious a Slander, that any modest Man alive, but our Author, would be ashamed so basely to traduce a poor dead Man, and add new Grief to the affliction of his distressed Widow and Fatherless Children. For Mr. *Burneby's* Case was in one Word this; He serv'd the Company in place of their Chief at the Factory of *Syam* about two years, and Mr. *George Gossfricht* coming thither as Supervisor from the Agency, Anno 81. he found some faults in his Management; (which by the way I must do him right, to declare, were at worst but Errors in his Judgment, not his Will) but however he was displac'd, and went with Mr. *Gossfricht* to *Bantam*, where he was discharg'd from the Companies Service by the Council, that then managed their Affairs, and after some Months stay there, and at *Batavia*, he did with their leave return on a *Dutch Ship* to *Syam*. And as to that ingrateful insinuation of his being corrupted by *Phaulkon*, all I will now say of it, is, That it is like the many other returns have been made to that *Honourable Person* my Lord *Phaulkon*, for his great Favours to the Nation in general, and several of *Our Countrymen* in particular.

And now to conclude, As to those Suggestions concerning my self, *That I saved my Life by swimming aboard one of the Companies Ships, and their Servants did not only relieve me, but notwithstanding my former Miscarriages were so kind to give me a small Prize, on which I arriv'd at the Cape*. I refer to the true account I have given in this Paper of all that pass'd in those Extremities, for a full Confutation of these Fictions, and will only add; That when I am accus'd of my pretended Miscarriages, I will render any reasonable satisfaction for whatever can be prov'd against me, as I also presume to expect the Company will at length be pleas'd to give me thanks at least for those good Services they already know I have done them. But if after all, it be impossible to merit so much favour at their hands; however, since God has in great Mercy been pleas'd, after I have pass'd through so many Dangers and Miseries, to bring me home alive on a Ship of my own, to which I have as good a Title as the Author can pretend to any thing he possesses in the World; I hope, that when I have recover'd that considerable Estate which the Companies Servants have with most inhumane Violence taken from me, and obtain'd satisfaction for those vast Losses and Injuries I sustain'd by their Hostile Attempts at *Mergen*; I shall be enabled to provide my self with Ships, and all things else that my Occasions require, without being beholden to the Author or his Accomplices.

Samuel White.